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SOURCE

1. Since 1951 it has been quite easy for specialists such as engineers, technicians, accountants, bookkeepers, or the like, to find employment in the USSR. there was still a considerable shortage of trained specialists, and quite a number of vacancies existed in almost every enterprise in the USSR. What was more, any specialist who decided to quit his job and take another did not have to be afraid of remaining jobless for any length of time; this also held true for skilled workers. Prior to 1951, however, it had been quite difficult to quit a job, because of a multitude of regulations by which employees and workers were frozen in their jobs. Beginning in 1951 some of these regulations were cancelled, and those still in force were no longer applied so strictly. At any rate, it became relatively simple to quit a job in the USSR and to find another one.
2. The basic rule that every individual who had received a higher education had to serve the equivalent length of time (or 3 years ~~in the position~~ and at the locality assigned to him when graduating from the school was not changed when charges for tuition were introduced. This period was referred to as probationary. The justification given for this policy was that tuition represented but a small part of the expenses for educating an individual, the largest part of which was still borne by the State. Accordingly, this rule theoretically applied to all individuals with advanced education regardless of whether they had paid their tuition or not. To quit the job or to change it during the probationary period (obyazatel'naya stazhirovka), a justified reason and a court decree had been required. After the expiration of the probation period (stazh), anyone who had had a higher education could change his employment just as freely as the employee or worker who had not; those in the latter category could change almost at will.

SECRET

SECURITY INFORMATION

Page Denied

SECRET

-2-

3. I do not know exactly whether it was a new decree or an amendment of the previous labor decree of 26 June 1940 prohibiting change of employment which was published in 1951. But I remember very well that according to this 1951 legislation, the prescribed procedure for change of employment became as follows:
- a. Any individual who desired to change his employment, regardless of whether he was a salaried employee or a piece-rate worker had to submit a written request to his enterprise management; any reason was acceptable. If nothing else, it was sufficient to state that "family reasons" compelled one to change his job, or that he had a chance for a better paid job with another enterprise.
 - b. If no decision by the enterprise management was made within 30 days, the individual was authorized by the same decree to submit another request, forwarding at the same time a copy to the State Attorney (Gosudarstvennyy Prokuror).
 - c. If within 14 days no decision was made on the second request by the enterprise management, the individual was authorized to report to the State Attorney's office requesting a statement (spravka) that he had quit his job voluntarily. The State Attorney was strongly advised to grant such requests without delay.
4. Many new industries were built after World War II in the USSR. Very often not only labor conditions and work safety were much higher in these enterprises than in old, pre-war ones, but the plants almost always had adequate housing projects for workers. But these new industries suffered from a manpower shortage. Therefore, the change in labor legislation which came about in 1951, should not be thought of as dictated solely by the desire to slacken labor discipline and to give workers more liberties; it should also be considered as an incentive for management to improve working conditions, to build housing projects, and to make it attractive to workers to stay with their old jobs. Prior to 1951 management was not interested in these improvements, since there was no danger that workers would quit; the law prohibited their quitting. In a way this new legislation created a kind of competition among enterprises to create favorable working and living conditions and to attract the best manpower.
5. The procedure described [in Par. 3] was applicable to all employees and workers with the only difference being that "nomenclature" employees had to submit their request for a change of job not to the plant management but to the responsible nomenclature superior.
6. I am fully satisfied that the above-mentioned change of labor legislation affected the entire USSR, and it was not an exceptional policy applied to the Georgian SSR.
7. I do not have any recollection of whether this change of labor legislation was published in the newspapers or broadcast over the radio; most probably it was not. At least I did not see it published as a decree, probably because I was not interested and did not need to use it. However, I know well that this was common knowledge in Tbilisi. The respective decree or regulation was commonly referred to as (Pravo Ukhoda) which means the "right to quit".

SECRET

Page Denied

SECRET

-3-

8. The decree of 26 June 1940 was applied very strictly before and during World War II. After World War II, however, there was more and more laxity in its application. The start of this laxity came with a regulation by which enterprises were advised to grant releases to wives of war veterans who were living elsewhere. On the basis of this regulation, millions of women had to be granted transfers. On the other hand, returnees to regions occupied by the Germans in World War II had also to be granted permission to change employment. In my opinion, instrumental in the promulgation of the June 1940 decree was the desire of the government to create labor legislation necessary for the preparation and conduct of war. After the war, although there was probably no real necessity for maintaining the legislation, it was considered adequate not to abolish it altogether, but rather to relax the strictness of its application. As liberal as it may appear at first glance, the 1951 labor legislation embodied a deterrent to any mass change of employment; this lay in the requirement of submitting a written request to the enterprise management and of probably having to appear in person to explain to the enterprise's director or chief of personnel one's reason for desiring a transfer. Unless a worker indeed desired and needed to change his job, he often would not go through all this trouble.

50X1 9. Prior to 1951 it had been required to have a justifiable reason for

50X1 10. Regardless of the type of work or employment, all employees and workers in the USSR were provided with workbooks (Trudovaya Knizhka). This book contained entries of all employments of the bearer, starting and closing date of employments and positions held or work performed as well as causes of transfers.

[redacted] was not sure whether it was an equivalent length of time or three years.

SECRET

Page Denied